

blunting edges of a composite arrangement for use as the sensing element to increase a thermal shock resistance of the sensing element;

sintering the composite arrangement to yield the sensing element, the composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form; and

sectioning the composite arrangement from a wafer with a laser, the wafer including individual composite arrangements composed of a composite of green films, wherein the sectioning step is performed simultaneously with the blunting step, and wherein the blunting step includes the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement with the laser.

REMARKS

Applicants have canceled claims 13, 14 and 24, the final rejection of which claims was affirmed by the Board of Appeals. In addition, the Examiner previously indicated in the final Office Action mailed on October 10, 2000, that claims 15-23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to overcome the indefiniteness rejection and to incorporate the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Since the amendment to claim 15 (made in the Amendment dated December 7, 2000), i.e., rewriting claim 15 in independent form to overcome the indefiniteness rejection of base claim 13 and to incorporate the limitations of base claim 13 and intervening claim 14, has been entered, Applicants note that claim 15 should now be in allowable condition. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit herewith amendments to claims 16, 19, 20, 21 and 23, which amendments merely rewrite these claims in independent form to incorporate the limitations of base claim 13 (as amended in the Amendment mailed on December 7, 2000 to overcome the indefiniteness rejection of claim 13). Claim 17 depends from

claim 16; claim 18 depends from claim 17; and claim 22 depends from claim 21. Since the present Amendment raises no new issues and clearly puts the present application in condition for allowance, the present Amendment should be entered pursuant to MPEP 1214.07.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 5/23/03

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AMENDMENT VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 16, 19, 20, 21 and 23 have been amended as follows:

16. (Twice Amended) [The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of:] A method for manufacturing a sensing element for determining oxygen content in exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising the steps of:

blunting edges of a composite arrangement for use as the sensing element to increase a thermal shock resistance of the sensing element;

sintering the composite arrangement to yield the sensing element, the composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form; and

introducing a profile into a stamping apparatus for pre-pressing a laminate construction of unsintered films of the composite arrangement.

19. (Twice Amended) [The method according to claim 13,] A method for manufacturing a sensing element for determining oxygen content in exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising the steps of:

blunting edges of a composite arrangement for use as the sensing element to increase a thermal shock resistance of the sensing element; and

sintering the composite arrangement to yield the sensing element, the composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form;

wherein the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement further includes the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement using a laser treatment.

20. (Twice Amended) [The method according to claim 13,] A method for manufacturing a sensing element for determining oxygen content in exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising the steps of:

blunting edges of a composite arrangement for use as the sensing element to increase a thermal shock resistance of the sensing element; and

sintering the composite arrangement to yield the sensing element, the composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form;

wherein the step of blunting includes the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement using an excimer laser having definable masking.

21. (Twice Amended) [The method according to claim 13,] A method for manufacturing a sensing element for determining oxygen content in exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising the steps of:

blunting edges of a composite arrangement for use as the sensing element to increase a thermal shock resistance of the sensing element; and

sintering the composite arrangement to yield the sensing element, the composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form;

wherein the step of blunting includes the step of treating sectioned composite arrangements with a laser, the sectioned composite arrangements having a composition construction of green films.

23. (Twice Amended) [The method according to claim 13, further comprising the step of:] A method for manufacturing a sensing element for determining oxygen content in exhaust gases of an internal combustion engine, comprising the steps of:

blunting edges of a composite arrangement for use as the sensing element to increase a thermal shock resistance of the sensing element;

sintering the composite arrangement to yield the sensing element, the composite arrangement including at least one ceramic paste present in film form; and

sectioning the composite arrangement from a wafer with a laser, the wafer including individual composite arrangements composed of a composite of green films, wherein the sectioning step is performed simultaneously with the blunting step, and wherein the blunting step includes the step of blunting the edges of the composite arrangement with the laser.